A BUDDHIST CATECHISM

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AN OUTLINE OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE BUDDHA GOTAMA

In the form of Question and Answer

COMPILED FROM THE SACRED WRITINGS OF THE SOUTHERN BUDDHISTS FOR THE USE OF EUROPEANS

WITH

EXPLANATORY NOTES

BY

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NEW YORK
BRENTANO'S
1920

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES

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PREFACE

THERE have appeared of late years, on the subject of Buddhism, a great many comprehensive and critical works, none, perhaps it may be said, of more value than F. W. Rhys David's essay; but yet no simple exposition, suited to the general intelligence, and setting forth the sublime doctrine of the Buddha Gotama, not as though a system no longer active, but as a yet living source of pure truth accessible, still, to all men athirst for spiritual knowledge and abundant to satisfy that thirst.

Of this sort the Buddhist Catechism of Henry S. Olcott affords the earliest example. It had a surprising success. Originally intended only for the instruction of Singalese children, it was scarcely suited to the highly educated European reader. Nevertheless, within a few years, many thousand copies were sold, a sufficient proof of the increasing interest taken in Buddhism by the Western world. Hence it becomes incumbent on the Buddha's disciples to put forth a Catechism suited to the intelligent appreciation of educated populations, and containing in a compendious form the essential doctrine of the Teacher, stripped of the trappings with which the super-

stition and childish conceptions of Eastern peoples had, in the long course of ages, sought to adorn it.

That is the aim of our little book. It is addressed to those for whom material progress and augmented means of luxury do not constitute the goal of life, and to whom the prevalent cruel strife for the possession of worldly goods and grandeur, which the general selfishness makes each day more pitiless, is abhorrent; who long for that peace of the heart and satisfaction of the understanding which alone give life its value, and who fail to find these things in the soulless dogmas of the various Churches, or even in the results displayed, with whatever ostentation, by physical science.

For such this Buddhist Catechism is written; and if they read it aright and catch its spirit, they will find in it what they have been seeking: a doctrine free from dogma and from formalism in entire harmony with Nature and her laws; the grandest truths, satisfying alike to mind and heart, expressed in simple terms, intelligible to the humblest capacity, yet of a significance so profound as not to be within easy sounding even by the philosophic and scientific European, with all his high culture and all his intellectual resources.

One remark, however, is called for here. A Catechism meant for learners and beginners must of necessity be restricted in compass, and cannot, even so far as complete, extend to the exposition of principles in their last inferences.

Let those, then, who aspire to a fuller and completer knowledge, who not only wish to become acquainted with the doctrine but to carry it out in the life, seek to make progress by their own meditations, and by personal communion with those already in advance of them upon the way here pointed out.

May the light of the world-illuminating Truth which, at this present, from the far East, whence all light arises, beams upon these Western lands, spread ever more and more widely for the weal, the salvation, the redemption of all mankind.

SUBHÁDRA BHIKSHU.

A BUDDHIST CATECHISM

INTRODUCTION

1. *Of what religion* (1) *are you?*

Of the Buddhist religion.

2. *What is the Buddhist religion?*

One who reveres the Buddha as the dispenser of spiritual light, the supreme guide and teacher of all living beings; who believes his doctrine, observes its precepts, and has given public and solemn testimony to this, by repeating what is called the "Refuge" formula.

3. *What are the words of the formula or declaration so called?*

They are as follows:

I take my refuge in the Buddha.
I take my refuge in the doctrine (Dhamma).
I take my refuge in the Brotherhood of the Elect (Sangha).

4. *What is the solemn repetition of this formula meant to express?*

He who utters the formula, publicly affirms by so doing that he henceforth considers the Buddha his master and guide, acknowledges the sacred

doctrine to be the foundation and essence of all truth and righteousness, and declares the Brotherhood of the Elect to be the true and faithful followers, teachers, and interpreters of this doctrine.

5. *Is this formula obligatory on all Buddhists?*

On all without exception, whether they belong to the Buddhist laity or to the Brotherhood of the Elect, who have embraced the life of a Bhikshu. He alone who has repeated the formula of Refuge, before a congregation or its representatives, is really a member of the Buddhist community.

6. *How should this Holy Triad (threefold Safeguard), which the Buddhist professes to be his refuge, be called?*

The three guiding stars. For as the stars of heaven guide the lonely mariner across the dark and tempestuous sea, so they guide him, who trusts in them, across the desert ocean of ignorance, passion and worldly desire, into the haven of eternal peace (Nirvana). Therefore the Buddhist, full of trust, of gratitude and veneration, looks up to these three guiding stars, fervently repeating:

Reverence to the Blessed One, who has overcome the world, the self-enlightened supreme Buddha.

Reverence to the holy, pure, and saving doctrine.

Reverence to the Brotherhood of the Elect.

THE BUDDHA

7. *Who is the Buddha?*

The Founder of the kingdom of righteousness and truth, the Self-enlightened Blessed One, perfect in holiness, wisdom, and mercy.

8. *Is the Buddha a God, who has revealed himself to mankind?*

No.

9. *Or one sent by God to come into the world to bring salvation?*

No.

10. *Then he was a man?*

Yes; but a man far superior to ordinary men, one of a series of self-enlightened sublime Buddhas, who appear at long intervals in the world, and are morally and spiritually so superior to erring, suffering mankind, that to the childlike conceptions of the multitude they appear as Gods or Messiahs.

11. *Is Buddha a proper name?*

No; Buddha means a mental state or condition.

12. *What is the meaning of the word Buddha?*

It means the Enlightened; it signifies a man who by his own exertions, has attained supreme knowledge and moral perfection.

13. *What was the Buddha's real name?*

At his birth the name of Siddhartha was given him. His family name was Gotama.

14. *Who were his parents?*

King Suddhodana and Queen Maya.

15. *What people did King Suddhodana reign over?*

He reigned over the Indian tribe of the Sakyas.(2)

16. *When was Prince Siddhartha born?*

He was born on a Friday, in the year 623 before the European era.

17. *Was his lofty destiny in any way foretold?*

Yes; it was foretold by the Brahmans, who were the priests and astrologers at King Suddhodana's court.

18. *What were their predictions?*

If Prince Siddhartha continues in the world he will become a mighty monarch, a king of kings; but if he renounces the world to lead a contemplative life, he will become a supreme Buddha.

19. *Was this the only prediction concerning Prince Siddhartha's future?*

No; the holy recluse Kaladevala (3) came down from the wilds of the Himalaya, prostrated himself

before the child, and said: "Verily this child will become a supreme Buddha, and will show men the way to perfection and salvation." And he wept to think that he should not himself live to see the day.

20. *Was King Suddhodana glad to hear this prediction?*

No; on the contrary, he tried by all possible means to prevent its coming to pass; his utmost desire was that Prince Siddhartha should become a mighty monarch.

21. *By what means did he try to gain his object?*

He kept out of the prince's sight everything that might have given him an idea of human suffering and death. He surrounded him with every enjoyment and royal luxury. Meantime the best masters had to instruct him in all arts and sciences and princely accomplishments. When Prince Siddhartha was grown up his father gave him three palaces, one for each of the Indian seasons — the hot, the cold, and the rainy season. These palaces were fitted up with every imaginable luxury, and surrounded with beautiful gardens and groves, where grottoes, fountains, lakes, all lovely with the lotus, and beds of fragrant flowers lent enchantment to the scene. In this delightful abode the prince passed his young life, but he was not allowed to go beyond the boundaries, and all poor, sick and aged people were strictly forbidden entrance.

22. *Did Prince Siddhartha live quite by himself in these palaces and gardens?*

No. A great number of young nobles were in attendance on him, and when he was sixteen his father gave him to wife Princess Yasodhara, the daughter of King Suprabuddha. Many beautiful maidens, too, trained in the arts of music and dancing, were always in waiting for his amusement.

23. *How could the idea of leaving the world occur to the prince amidst all these delights?*

During his drives he saw four most impressive sights which enlightened him as to the real nature of human life.

24. *What were these sights?*

A decrepit old man, broken down by infirmity; a sick man, covered with sores; a decaying body and a venerable hermit.

25. *What impressions did these visions make on Prince Siddhartha?*

They moved him to the heart's core, and showed him the utter vanity and nothingness of life. Its deceptive, transitory pleasures, to be followed by old age, sickness and death, had no longer any attraction for him. Henceforth he discarded all amusements, and he came to the conviction that life is not a gift to be desired, but rather an evil to be avoided, and that it is unworthy of our higher nature to seek for sensual enjoyment. All

his efforts were now directed towards the attainment of a higher aim.(4)

26. *What was the aim?*

To find out the cause of suffering, of death, and of birth-renewal,(5) and to discover the means of overcoming it. In imitation of the venerable recluse he had met, he resolved to retire from the world into the wilderness.

27. *Was it a great trial for him to carry out his resolution?*

Yes; for he had to give up all that is generally the most prized by men: royalty, riches, power, honour, delights, and even the companionship of his beloved wife and his infant son Rahula.

28. *Did his father and his wife try to dissuade him from this purpose?*

He kept them in ignorance of his designs and went away secretly for fear the entreaties of his aged father and the tears of his wife might make him swerve from his resolve.(6)

29. *How did he effect his escape?*

One night, when everybody was asleep, he softly got up, took a last parting look at his wife and child, woke up his attendant Channa, ordered him to saddle his favourite horse Kanthaka, and rode away. The sentry at the gate did not notice him, and he hastened off in the darkness as fast as his horse could carry him.

30. *How old was Prince Siddhartha when he retired into the jungle?*

He was in his twenty-ninth year.

31. *Where did he first go to?*

To the river Anoma. There he cut off his beautiful long hair with his sword, and gave in charge to the faithful Channa his arms, his jewels, and his horse, to take them back to Kapilvasthu, and to tell the king and the princess what had become of him. After Channa's departure, Siddhartha passed seven days near the banks of the river Anoma, lost in deep meditation, and rejoicing to have taken the first and all-important step in the attainment of knowledge, and to have cast off the shackles of a worldly life. He then exchanged clothes with a passing beggar, and proceeded to Rajagriha, the capital of the kingdom of Magadha.

32. *Why did he go there?*

There were two Brahmans living there, Alara and Uddaka, both reputed to be very wise and holy men. He became their disciple, under the name of Gotama.

33. *What did they teach?*

They taught that the soul may be purified by prayer, sacrifices, and various other religious observances; and may thus, by divine mercy, attain redemption.

34. *Did Gotama find what he sought?*

No; he learnt all these Brahmans could teach him, and joined in all their religious exercises without gaining the knowledge he sought; and he became convinced that their teaching could not ensure him deliverance from suffering, death, and birth-renewal.

35. *What did he do after this failure?*

There were other Brahmans, who taught that deliverance could be attained by a mere process of self-mortification. Gotama made up his mind to practise asceticism in its severest form, and for that purpose he retired into a jungle not far from Uruvela, where, in utter solitude, he gave himself up to all kinds of penances and tortures.(7) The fame of his sanctity soon began to spread, and he was joined by five other ascetics, who, full of admiration for his fortitude and perseverance, remained with him, in the sure conviction that such a life of self-mortification would lead him speedily to the attainment of supreme knowledge and perfection. Then they would become his disciples.

36. *What are the names of these five ascetics?*

Kondanya, Bhaddiya, Vappa, Mahanama, and Assaji.

37. *How long did Gotama remain in the wilderness near Uruvela?*

Upwards of six years. His bodily strength at last gave way under these continued self-inflic-

tions, vigils, and fastings, but he did not relax. One night, when, lost in deep meditation, he was pacing up and down, he suddenly fell down, utterly exhausted, in a fainting fit. His companions thought he was dying, but he soon revived again.

38. *Did he nevertheless persevere in his ascetic life?*

No. He was now convinced that asceticism, instead of giving him the peace of mind and the knowledge he desired, was only a stumbling-block in the way of truth and moral perfection.([8]) He discontinued his fastings and penances, and was in consequence deserted by his companions as an apostate.

39. *Did Gotama despair of reaching his end?*

No, not for a moment. Left entirely to himself and his own devices, he determined to follow henceforward exclusively his own inner light. He abandoned all his ascetic practices, and, whilst restraining worldly thought and desire, was intent alone on the highest development of his moral and mental faculties. One night he was apprised, in prophetic dreams, that he was approaching the goal. He awoke, bathed in the river Niranjara, and took some boiled rice, presented to him by a young maiden named Sujata. He spent the whole day in deep meditation near the bank of the river. Towards evening he sat down beneath

a mighty Nigrodha-tree,(9) that stood not far off, and there remained sitting with his face to the East, firmly resolved not to leave the spot until he had attained supreme knowledge and understanding. Here it was that he won the victory after a final struggle, the fiercest of all.

40. *What struggle?*

The struggle against human wishes and desires, which came back upon him with renewed force, though he had supposed himself to have gained already a complete mastery over them: the struggle against delusions and love of existence, against that craving, that will to live, which is the motive power of our being and the chief source of all our sufferings. The charms of wealth and power, and honour and glory, the sweet delights of home and love, and all the enjoyments which the world has in store for its favorites, began to glow again in their most brilliant light. An agonizing doubt seized upon him. But Gotama never wavered in his resolve, rather to die than to give up his high purpose. He wrestled with those terrible emotions, and was victorious. The last remnants of human frailty and of worldly desire were consumed in him. Then the deep peace of Nirvana entered his heart, and the full light of truth rose within him. The goal was reached, the veil rent, all knowledge attained. He had become a self-enlightened supreme Buddha.

41. *Had he now discovered the cause of sorrow, of old age, of death, and of birth-renewal?*

Yes; in the words of the holy books, there opened within him the bright clear eye of "truth," and he found what was the cause of birth and decay, of sorrow and death and birth-renewal, but he also found its remedy and the true way to deliverance, to Nirvana.

42. *How long did the Buddha remain under the Bodhi-tree?*

He remained there seven days absorbed in deep meditation. Then he rose and went to the fig-tree Ajapala. Then Mara the tempter([10]) came to him and said: "Pass away now, my Lord, from existence, satisfied with the blessed truth, which you have realized and which but very few can attain. Men are governed by selfish motives only. Earth is their dwelling-place, and there only do they find satisfaction. They are unable to grasp the eternal law of the Universe and of causation, and they refuse to listen to the great doctrine of absolute renunciation of the will to live, of the conquest of earthly wishes and desires, and of the way to final deliverance. Desist, then, from the resolve to preach this doctrine and pass to eternal peace."

43. *Did the Buddha listen to the adversary's words?*

No; he spurned him with contempt. "Get thee hence, Evil One," he said. "I shall not pass

out of existence until this pure doctrine of mine is firmly implanted in the hearts of my followers, until I have succeeded in winning a number of true disciples, who, when I am gone, will, in my stead, spread abroad the saving truth out of pity for the multitudes, for the good, for the salvation, the deliverance of both gods([11]) and men."

Then the tempter left him. The Buddha remained three weeks longer near the fig-tree Ajapala, enjoying the perfect bliss of his deliverance and absorbed in the definite preparation of his doctrine. At the end of that time he rose and said: "Welcome to all who enter the gates of salvation. He who has ears to hear, let him hear and believe."

44. *Who were the first people that heard him preach?*

The five ascetics who had stayed with him, and deserted him when he no longer practised ascetism.

45. *Where did he find them again?*

In a grove near Benares, at the hermitage of Migadya.

46. *Did the ascetics lend a willing ear to his discourse?*

They intended not to do so, as they considered him to be an apostate; but the majesty of his appearance and the sublime expression of his

countenance made such a deep impression on their minds, that against their own will they bowed down before him and listened reverentially to his words.

47. *What is this first preaching of the Buddha called?*

The Establishment of the Moral Order of the Universe, or the Foundation of the Kingdom of Righteousness. This sermon contains the fundamental truths of the whole doctrine — the four grand truths.

48. *What effect had this sermon on the five ascetics?*

They acknowledged the Buddha to be the perfectly Enlightened One, the giver of truth, the guide to Nirvana, and they desired to become his disciples.

Then the Blessed One admitted them as the first members into the Brotherhood of the Elect (Sangha), with the following words: "Welcome, brethren, the truth is clear. Live henceforth in holiness, and thus put an end to all suffering."

49. *Which of the five disciples first realized the supreme truth?*

The aged Kondanya. There opened within him the clear eye of truth, and he attained the state of an Arahat.([12]) The other four disciples soon followed him.

50. *Did the Buddha gain any more disciples at Benares?*

Yes. The next convert was Yasa, a young nobleman. But the common people, as well as the higher classes, listened to the words of the sublime teacher; for he made no distinction of caste or rank or position as the Brahmans do, but preached the doctrine of salvation to all those disposed to hear him, and his words were all-powerful, searching the innermost heart. At the end of five months the number of his disciples amounted to sixty, not including any lay adherents. The Buddha then began to send forth the brethren in various directions.

51. *What is meant by the sending forth of the brethren?*

The Buddha called them all together and bade them go out into the world, each separately by himself, and preach the doctrine of salvation.([18])

52. *What was the formula he made use of?*

The Buddha, addressing the brethren, said: "You are free from all fetters, either human or divine. Depart, then, and preach the saving truth to all living beings, out of compassion for suffering humanity, and for the benefit and welfare of both gods and men. There are many persons of pure heart and willing mind, who must perish if they do not hear the doctrine of redemption. These will become your supporters and confessors of the truth."

53. *Did the Buddha remain alone at Benares?*

No; he returned to Uruvela, where a great number of Brahmans lived in huts in the wilderness, kept up the sacred fire, and performed the religious rites and ceremonies prescribed in the Vedas. The Buddha preached to them of the consuming fire of sensual desires, of passions and lusts. He converted many and they became his disciples. He then proceeded to Rajagriha, where King Bimbisara and a great number of his nobles professed themselves his adherents. Thus the doctrine of salvation continued to gain ground.

54. *Did not the Buddha return to his former home at Kapilavasthu?*

From Rajagriha he went on to Kapilavasthu, and the fame of his doings went before him. In obedience to the rules of the Brotherhood he stopped in a grove outside the town, instead of returning to the royal palace. King Suddhodana and all his male relations came to welcome him, but when they saw him in the poor dress of a mendicant (Bhikshu), with shaven hair and beard, they were scandalized.

Early next morning the Buddha set out, accompanied by his disciples, carrying his alms bowl, (14) to beg his daily bread from door to door, as is the custom of the Brotherhood. When his father heard this, he came in great haste and said reproachfully: "My son, why do you bring such

disgrace upon me, asking alms like a common beggar?"

The Buddha replied: "Great king, this has been the custom of all my race."

But King Suddhodana did not understand the meaning of these words, and exclaimed: "We are descended from a line of kings and nobles, and none of us has ever fallen so low as to beg for bread from door to door."

The Buddha said with a smile: "You and yours are right to claim descent from kings, but my descent is from the Buddhas of long past centuries,([15]) and they were wont to do as I do." Then King Suddhodana was silent, took him by the hand and led him to the palace.

55. *Did not the Buddha meet his wife and child once more?*

That same day he went to see the Princess Yasodhara, accompanied by two of his disciples.([16]) And when Yasodhara saw him in the garb of a mendicant, she burst into tears, and falling down before him clasped his knees. The Buddha raised her up, trying to comfort her with gentle words, and explained the doctrine to her. His words fell on good ground and took root in her heart.

After the Buddha had left her, Yasodhara dressed her son Rahula in his best attire and sent him to his father to ask for his inheritance. And when the boy had come into the presence of the

Buddha, he said: "Father, one day I shall be king, and rule over the Sakyas. I pray thee, give me my inheritance."

Then the Blessed One took him by the hand and led him outside the town to the Nigrodha grove, where he had taken up his abode with the disciples, and said: "My son, thou askest me for an earthly inheritance, which is perishable and fraught with sorrow. I have none such to give thee. The inheritance I leave thee, is the treasures I have gathered beneath the tree of knowledge; these can never be snatched from thee."

He then gave orders to Sariputta to admit Rahula into the Brotherhood of the Elect, and with him many of the Buddha's relatives, among them Ananda, Devadatta, Upali, and Anuruddha.

56. *Who were the most distinguished disciples of the Buddha besides those named already?*

Sariputta Mogallana, and Kasyapa.

57. *How long did the Buddha remain at Kapilavasthu?*

He spent the four months of the rainy season there, in the second year of his public teaching. Then he set out to pursue his great work elsewhere.

58. *How long did he go on preaching and teaching?*

Up to the hour of his death, forty-five years altogether. During the eight months of the dry

season he used to go from place to place, accompanied by a number of his disciples, exhorting the people, and teaching them by parables and sermons. But the time of the rainy season he always spent at one place, either at the house of one of his disciples or in the gardens and groves bestowed upon the Order by some of the rich lay believers.

59. *Where was the favourite resort of the Buddha?*

The bamboo grove (Veluvana) near Rajagriha, which had once been a park of King Bimbisaras, and had been presented by him to the Buddha; and the Jeta grove (Jetavana) near Sravasti, a gift of the rich merchant Anathapindika. In both these places there were hermitages for the use of the Bhikshus. They have become famous in the history of Buddhism as being the spots where the Blessed One([17]) expounded most of the truths contained in the holy books.

60. *Did the Buddhist religion become firmly established within these forty-five years?*

Yes; the fame of the Buddha and his holy doctrine spread rapidly. Thousands of people of all ranks and conditions, men and women, took the higher vows and were received into the Brotherhood (Sangha) as mendicants (Bhikshus, Samanas), or nuns (Bhikshunis), and countless numbers professed as laymen belief in the Enlightened One.([18])

61. *Had not the Buddha to suffer any persecution or hostility on the part of the follower of the dominant Brahman religion?*

No; all intolerance of nonconformists, all religious fanaticism is equally averse to both Buddhism and true Brahmanism. It was one of the Buddha's own disciples who rose up against him.

62. *Who was it?*

Devadatta. Carried away by ambition, he aimed at the leadership of the Brotherhood; and when he failed, sought even to take the aged Master's life. All his plots, however, were of no avail.

63. *How did the Buddha frustrate these evil designs?*

By his inexhaustible benevolence and kindness; for these qualities exert a miraculous, irresistible power, which subdues the fiercest enemies and puts to nought all the designs of wickedness, hatred, and treachery.

64. *Have we any account of the Buddha's dying days?*

Yes; the Maha-Parinibbana-Sutta, or the Book of the Buddha's final passing away, gives a full account thereof.

65. *What is the account?*

When the Blessed One was in his eightieth year, he felt his strength ebbing away. And he said to

his constant companion, Ananda([19]): "I am a man bowed down by age, Ananda. The measure of my days is full and my life is drawing to a close." Then Ananda was sorely troubled, and he entreated the Master not yet to depart. But the Buddha rebuked him, saying: "Have I not on many former occasions taught you, that it is in the very nature of all things, however near and dear to us, that we must lose them, leave them, separate from them? There is no such thing as eternal duration. Everything born, brought into existence and organized, of necessity inherits dissolution. How, then, could it be possible that any human being, yea, even a supreme Buddha, should not be dissolved? Behold! I tell you true, this day three months the Tathagata([20]) will pass away out of existence. Therefore, brethren, ye to whom I have made known the truth, be always the true doers of it; practise it; be earnest in effort to work out your own perfection, and proclaim the doctrine to all when I am gone, that it may be instilled into the hearts of the hearers and be preserved in its purity. He who keeps in the path of true holiness, will safely cross this dreary ocean of life, and reach the heaven of eternal peace, where all suffering and all birth-renewal is at an end."

And though the Blessed One was very weak and suffering, he still went on from place to place, gathering round him his disciples and followers, exhorting them to persevere and to keep in the right way that leads to salvation.

On his arrival at Bhoya-nagara he stopped at the Ananda-Vihara, and there he addressed his disciples: "When I have departed, brethren, there will be some amongst you, elders or brethren or hermits, who may say: From the mouth of the Tathagata I have heard it, from his own mouth have I received it. This is the truth, the doctrine, the teaching of the Master. Such words you are neither to receive indiscriminately nor treat them scornfully, but without prejudice you are to listen to each word and syllable, and compare them with the fundamental doctrines and rules laid down for the Brotherhood. If after careful examination they do not agree with the doctrine and the rules of the Brotherhood, reject them; otherwise receive them as my own words. This is my instruction to you."

The Buddha next went to Bhoya-gama, and from there to Pava, where he stayed at the mango grove of Chunda, the worker in metals. When Chunda heard it he was glad, and he came to salute the Enlightened One, and to ask him to take his meal with him at his house, together with the brethren. And the Buddha gave a silent assent.

Then Chunda made ready the best he possessed, rice and sweet cakes and some dried boar's flesh. When the Buddha saw it he addressed Chunda and said: "As to the dried boar's flesh you have made ready, Chunda, serve it to me alone, and the rice and the sweet cakes give to the brethren." And Chunda did as he desired. And when the

Buddha had finished his meal, he turned again to Chunda, and said: "Whatever is left over of the meat, that bury in a hole, for there is none in heaven and earth, among the Samanas or Brahmanas, among gods or men, by whom such food can be eaten without hurt to himself, save alone the Tathagata."

66. *What did the Buddha mean by saying so?*

He wished to intimate to his adherents that the flesh of animals is no proper food for men and beings of a higher order, and that every one who partakes thereof does it to the injury of his own body and mind. For this reason he forbade Chunda to give any to his disciples.

67. *But why did the Buddha take some of the wild boar's flesh himself?*

Because he was anxious not to infringe his own precepts, according to which the brethren are not allowed to refuse anything that is kindly offered them.

68. *Give some further account of the Buddha's last hours.*

After the Buddha had gladdened and edified Chunda by his religious discourse, he went on to Kusinara. On the way a dire sickness and sharp pain came upon him, but he bore it all with fortitude and without complaint. Soon his weakness became so great that he had to sit down under a tree by the wayside. And he addressed Ananda,

and said: "Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water, for I am thirsty."

And Ananda answered: "Master, a caravan of carts has just gone over the brook. The water has become stirred up by the wheels, and has become turbid and muddy." But the Blessed One repeated his request.

Then Ananda took his bowl and went down to the brook. And behold! the water which but now had been turbid and muddy, flowed clear and limpid, free from all turbidity. Ananda wondered but he filled his bowl and brought it to the Buddha, who drank it and felt refreshed.

Now, a young Mallian, by name Pukkusa, the owner of the caravan, was passing along the road. When he saw the Blessed One sitting under the tree, he went up to him and saluted him full of reverence. Then he gave orders to one of his attendants to fetch him two suits of cloth of gold, burnished and ready to wear. And addressing the Buddha, he said: "My Lord, do me the favour to accept these suits at my hands." The Buddha answered: "Then give me one of them, and Ananda one." And Ananda put one of the robes of cloth of gold upon the Buddha, and when he had done so it seemed to have lost all its glitter.

Ananda was astonished, and said: "Master, what a wonderful thing is this! Your countenance is of such marvellous beauty and brightness that the robe of cloth of gold seems to have lost all its glitter."

The Blessed One answered: "Even so, Ananda. There are two occasions on which the face of a Tathagata becomes exceeding bright: on the night in which he attains supreme and perfect insight, and again on the night when he passes finally away out of existence.([21]) And now this night, in the third watch, the final passing away of the Tathagata will take place."

Then the Enlightened One rose, greatly refreshed, and with his disciples went to the Sala grove of the Mallas near Kusinara, on the banks of the river Hiranyavati. And, addressing Ananda, said:

"Put for me, I pray thee, the couch between the two sala-trees, for I am tired and would lie down."

"I do so, Master," replied Ananda. Then he made the couch ready between the twin sala-trees. And the Blessed One lay down, with his head to the north. And behold! the sala-trees were one mass of blossoms, though it was not the season for flowers. They fell like rain on the body of the Blessed One, and sweet music came wafted from the skies.

And the Buddha said:

"Behold, brethren! Heaven and earth vie with each other to do reverence to the Tathagata. But it is not thus that the Tathagata is duly honoured and reverenced. Those of my disciples who continually live in spirit and in truth. and who walk always in the light of my precepts, those

alone do rightly honour and reverence the Tathagata."

And after awhile he turned again to his disciples, and said: "There may be some among you, who will think after I am gone: Our teacher is dead; we have no longer any guide. But it is not thus you should think. The doctrine I have taught you and the rules of the Brotherhood I have laid down for you, these are to be, after I am gone, your teacher and guide."

And the Buddha lifted up his voice once more and said: "Brethren, keep in mind those words of mine: Whatever is born perishes. Strive unceasingly for your deliverance."

These were the Buddha's last words. Then his spirit sank into a deep meditative repose, till all idea and thinking and consciousness of self ceased, and so he passed into the supreme Nirvana.

Outside the eastern gates of Kusinara the Mallas set fire to the Blessed One's funeral pile, and paid him all the honour due to a king.

"They pass each being's parts and powers:
They grow, and therefore must decay:
The issue of the transient hours
Should, like the hours, pass away!"

THE DOCTRINE (DHAMMA)

69. *What is the doctrine?*

It is the true way of salvation intuitively perceived and announced by the Buddha; preserved to us in the tradition of the Arahats and recorded in the holy Scriptures.

70. *What are the holy Scriptures of the Buddhists called?*

The three Pitakas, or collections of books.

71. *What are the three Pitakas named respectively?*

Sutta Pitaka, Vinaya Pitaka, and Abidhamma Pitaka.

72. *What are the contents of the Sutta Pitaka?*

The Sutta Pitaka contains religious discourses, addresses, and sayings of the Buddha, intended for the instruction of the brethren as well as of the laity. It contains, too, a number of parables in illustration of the doctrine.

73. *What are the contents of the Vinaya Pitaka?*

The Vinaya Pitaka contains the precepts and rules laid down for the Brotherhood of the Elect (Sangha).

74. *What are the contents of the Abhidamma Pitaka?*

The Abhidamma Pitaka contains the profoundest philosophic and religious truths of Buddhism, and is intelligible only to those brethren who have already attained to a higher stage of moral and spiritual development.

75. *Do, then, these three collections contain any divine revelation?*

No; there are no divine revelations. It is a groundless assumption, utterly rejected by Buddhism, that truth should be revealed by a God, or an angel, to a few inspired favourites. The only revelation men have ever received is from the mouth of those sublime teachers of mankind, who themselves have worked out their own perfection and deliverance, have shown others the way to it, and are for that reason called self-enlightened supreme Buddhas.

76. *What was the Buddha's motive for teaching us the doctrine?*

Pity, boundless love and compassion for our sufferings and our ignorance, that ignorance or natural blindness([22]) of our hearts (avidya) which prevents us from finding, by ourselves, the way to deliverance out of this Sansara.

77. *What is Sansara?*

Sansara is the world we live in, the world of illusion, error, guilt, and sorrow, of birth and

decay, of endless change, disappointment and pain, of the never-ending circle of transmigration from which no escape is possible until the redeeming light of true knowledge has dawned upon us.

78. *What is the cause of sorrow, and of death and birth-renewal?*

The will or desire to live (tanha),[23] inherent in every one of us, the craving for individual existence either in this world or another (Heaven, Paradise).

79. *How can sorrow, death, and birth-renewal be overcome?*

By a free renunciation of the lust of life; by a killing out of the craving for individual existence either in this world or another. Therein lies deliverance: this is the way to eternal peace.

80. *But what is it prevents us from giving up this desire of life and from attaining deliverance?*

Our being ignorant, that is, our want of true knowledge, our want of insight into the real nature of things (avidya).

81. *What is the knowledge which leads us to salvation?*

The knowledge of the four grand truths taught us by the Buddha.

82. *Which are the four grand truths?*

1. Life implies pain.
2. Pain has a source.
3. That source can be stayed.
4. The means (of staying it) are attainable.

83. *Give a fuller explanation of these four grand truths.*

It is found in the Buddha's own words, in the Book of the Foundation of the Kingdom of Righteousness, which are as follows:

"It is through not understanding and grasping four truths, brethren, that we have to continue so long, to wander so long, in this weary path of transmigration — both you and I." And what are these four grand truths?

The truth concerning suffering.
The truth concerning the source of suffering.
The truth concerning the way which leads to suffering.
The truth concerning the way which leads to riddance from suffering.

But when these four grand truths are realized and known, then the desire of life dies; the craving for life, which leads to its renewal, is extinguished, and there is no more re-birth.

This, brethren, is the grand truth concerning suffering:

To be born is to suffer: to grow old is to suffer: to die is to suffer: to lose what is loved is

to suffer: to be tied to what is not loved is to suffer: to endure what is distasteful is to suffer. In short, all the results of individuality, of separate self-hood, necessarily involve pain or suffering.

This, brethren is the grand truth concerning the source of suffering:

It lies in that will to live, or craving for life which is itself the cause of its renewal, seeking satisfaction, now in one, now in another form. It is the craving, the gratification of the passions, the craving for one's own personal happiness, whether in this life or in some life after this.

This, brethren, is the grand truth concerning the riddance from suffering:

It is the extinction of the lust of life, of the craving for existence: this must be overcome, got rid of, rooted out utterly.

Now this, brethren, is the grand truth concerning the way which leads to the riddance from suffering — the sublime eightfold path; that is to say:

1. Right views;
2. Right aspirations;
3. Right speech;
4. Right conduct;
5. Right living;
6. Right effort;
7. Right mindfulness;
8. Right recollectedness.

There are two extremes which the man who has given up the world ought to avoid: on one hand, sensuality, the seeking to satisfy the passions and lusts of the body — base, degrading, and pernicious: this is the way of the worldly minded. And, on the other hand, asceticism or self-torture, which is saddening, unworthy, useless, and not helpful to deliverance.

The middle path, discovered by the Tathagata, avoids these two extremes; it opens the eyes, illumines the understanding, and leads to peace of mind, to the higher wisdom, to full enlightenment, to Nirvana.([24])

84. *What is Nirvana?*

It is a condition of heart and mind in which every earthly craving is extinct; it is the cessation of every passion and desire, of every feeling of ill-will, fear, and sorrow. It is a mental state of perfect rest and peace and joy, in the steadfast assurance of deliverance attained, from all the imperfections of finite being. It is a condition impossible to be defined in words, or to be conceived by any one still attached to the things of the world. Only he knows what Nirvana is who has realized it in his own heart.([25])

85. *Is Nirvana identical with deliverance?*

Yes; it is deliverance, and it is attainable in this life.

86. *Is every one able to reach Nirvana in this present life?*

Only the few can do so. Most men, in consequence of their acts in former lives, are morally and mentally so deficient that a great many re-births or re-incarnations are required to purify them ere they can attain deliverance. But whoever is in earnest may be re-born under more favourable circumstances.

87. *Is our birth-renewal solely dependent on our own will?*

Yes, entirely. This will to live (tanha)([26]) inherent in all of us, and the essential factor in our being, is the true creative power, which other religions personify as God; it is the cause of our existence and our re-incarnation, and is, in fact, the Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer of all things — the true Trinity.

88. *Are the conditions of our birth-renewal equally dependent on ourselves?*

Yes; our re-incarnation will be in perfect accordance with our doings, our merits, and demerits — in short, with our moral character. We shall be born again in a superior world, and among superior beings, if our deserts carry this result; but if, on the other hand, we have been evil-doers, re-birth in an inferior state, and attended with sorrow and pain, will be the inevitable consequence.([27])

89. *On what law does this rest?*

On the law of Karma.

90. *What is the law of Karma?*

Karma is the moral power working throughout the universe, of which the physical, visible order is but the material symbol. It is the law of cause and effect in the moral sphere. As in the physical order of causation so also in the moral, all things are followed by their necessary consequence. Karma is at once our individual moral character, and, at the same time, what in other religions is called the dispensation of God, providence, or destiny.([28])

91. *Is man's birth-renewal only on this earth?*

No; there are countless multitudes of other worlds moving in space, which are peopled with beings superior or inferior to man. In every one of these spheres re-incarnation may take place.

92. *Are these heavenly bodies immutable?*

No; like our earth they are governed by the universal law of perpetual change and motion. The whole animate and inanimate world is subject thereto.

93. *Did the world take origin out of nothing?*

No; nothing can ever come from nothing.

94. *Has a God-creator called the world into existence by his almighty will?*

No; there is no personal God-Creator, on whose mercy and goodwill the universe is dependent.

Everything owes its origin and development to its own inherent vitalism, or, what comes to the same, its own will to live. Human ignorance it is which alone invented a personal God-Creator. The Buddhist utterly rejects the belief in a personal God, and distinctly denies the doctrine of a creation out of nothing.([29])

95. *Did not the Buddha give us any information concerning the first beginning and ultimate destiny of the Universe?*

No;

96. *Did he know nothing about it?*

He knew, but he taught us nothing.

97. *Why not?*

Because such knowledge, even if it were possible to impart it, would not promote the spiritual and moral welfare of mankind, nor deliver men from suffering, nor lead them to salvation, to Nirvana. The final cause of all existence can only be comprehended by him who, like the Buddha, has already attained the most perfect degree of human development — that is, by a Buddha only.

98. *Is, then, an exposition of the problem of life impossible in words?*

Yes; because finite forms, to which both thought and language belong, cannot give expression to the Eternal, which has neither beginning nor end. Wherever the attempt has been made on the part of other religions, it has but led to vain

speculations, meaningless statements, disputes, misconceptions, and often even to war, murder, and cruelty of every sort. Instead of arriving at truth, salvation, and unity, the result has always been error, suffering, and disaster. Upon questions such as these the Buddha was silent.

99. *Shall we never get nearer the solution of this mystery?*

We shall undoubtedly. Every one who lives in obedience to the Buddha's doctrine can attain perfect wisdom and knowledge. Then the clouds of mystery and doubt which have enfolded him, and have obscured his mental sight, will disperse, and he will realize the eternal truth. But to do this, he must be firmly resolved to walk in the sublime eightfold path.([30])

100. *How is this to be done?*

By entering the Brotherhood of the Elect, by retiring from this world, and by striving with all one's might for the attainment of this supreme wisdom.

101. *Is every one able to do so?*

Yes; every one who is in earnest can do so; but few only are ready to give up the world and its illusive enjoyments.

102. *Cannot the laymen, too, attain to perfection?*

No; this is impossible. They alone can reach Nirvana in this present life who have entered the eightfold path of perfection.([31])

103. *Then there are different degrees in Buddhism?*

Yes; there are two. The laymen who repeat the formula of the three Refuges, and who take the first five vows, are called the adherents or confessors of the doctrine (Upasakas). The close and real disciples of the Buddha, properly and truly such, however, are exclusively those who renounce the world, take the ten vows, and enter on the eightfold path leading to perfection. They bear the name of Bhikshus, or Samanas, and constitute the Brotherhood of the Elect.

104. *Which are the five vows for the laity?*

They are as follows:

1. I vow and promise not to destroy life.([32])
2. I vow and promise not to steal.
3. I vow and promise to abstain from all unchastity, and not to lead astray the wives, daughters, or wards of any one.
4. I vow and promise not to lie, deceive, or bear false witness.
5. I vow and promise to abstain from intoxicating drinks.([33])

These Pancha-Sila are obligatory on every one professing to be a follower of the Buddha.

105. *What advantage will be derived from a faithful observance of these five vows?*

He who faithfully keeps them will be respected by all good men; he will be spared much pain

and suffering, retain a good conscience, and live in peace and goodwill with his fellow-men. His knowledge will increase, and he will be re-born under more favourable conditions. But he who keeps the eight vows (Atthanga-Sali) more or less completely, but at least for the weekly holy days, will gain a much greater reward.

106. *Which are the eight vows?*

The three following, beside the five enumerated just now:

6. I vow and promise not to eat food at unseasonable times — that is after the mid-day meal.
7. I vow and promise not to dance, sing light songs, frequent public amusements, and, in short, to avoid worldly dissipation of every kind.
8. I vow and promise not to wear any kind of ornament, nor to use any scents or perfumes, and, in short, to avoid whatever tends to vanity.

The vow of observing chastity and all unlawful sexual intercourse includes the obligation of continence, even for married people, during the observance of the Atthanga-Sila.

107. *Which are the ten vows for the members of the Brotherhood?*

The Dasa-Sila — that is, two vows, in addition to the eight already mentioned: these are —

9. I promise and vow to give up the use of soft bedding and to sleep on a hard, low couch.
10. And to live in voluntary poverty.

108. *In what way can these vows be broken?*

In three ways — in thought, word, and deed.

109. *Why is not a layman able to reach Nirvana?*

Because a worldly life renders impossible the complete observance of the ten vows, the breaking of the ten fetters, and the attainment of true knowledge. In fact a worldly life is altogether based upon ignorance and selfishness

110. *Are we then compelled to become Bhikshus, and to sacrifice all that is dear to us?*

It is not sacrifice, but deliverance. As long as we still look upon the giving up of worldly possessions, enjoyments, and pleasures in the light of a painful sacrifice, we are far from a real insight and from true knowledge. Only when we look upon this as a deliverance from what is profitless, futile, irksome, and oppressive, have we arrived at the full truth.([34])

111. *Cannot the Buddha redeem us from the consequences of our guilt by his own merit?*

No one can be redeemed by another. No God and no saint — so we are taught by the sacred books — is able to shield a man from the conse-

quences of his evil doings. Every one of us must become his own redeemer.

112. *In what single word can the whole doctrine be summed up?*

In the word "justice." The law of absolute, inviolable justice holds sway in the whole realm of animate and inanimate nature. Each good and each evil deed bears its own fruit. No personal God in his mercy can deliver the trembling sinner from the consequences of his evil doings. No arbitrary power of an Almighty Lord of heaven and earth can curtail the merit of a good man's actions.([35])

113. *How in a moral sense can merit be gained?*

By a faithful observance of the vows in thought, word, and deed; by a diligent search after truth; and, above all, by justice and kindness to every living being.

114. *Is it the outward act which determines its merit?*

Quite otherwise; no outward act is meritorious in itself: its merit entirely depends on the purity of its motive, and has value only so far as it is the expression and visible sign of an inward moral state of mind.

115. *Give an instance of this.*

A man may be spending large sums of money in support of the Brotherhood and of the poor,

without deriving any benefit whatever to his moral progress, if it has been done only from motives of gaining respect and the good opinion of others. Such a man has had his reward in the praise he has won in this present life. He, on the contrary, who is kind and charitable because he is anxious to improve and to obtain a more favourable birth-renewal, will reap the fruit of his deserts in his next life. The highest merit, however, is gained by him who, without expectation of reward in this world or another, does good to his fellow-men from motives of pure compassion and genuine charity. He is not far from Nirvana, and sure of re-birth in one of the bright worlds of light beyond these spheres.

116. *What then must we do to gain true merit?*

We must overcome selfishness, shun what is evil, do what is good.

117. *Why must selfishness be overcome?*

Because it is the root of all our errors, follies, and misdeeds, and the chief hindrance to our well-doing.

118. *What is a meritorious action?*

Everything done with the pure intention to promote the welfare of others and to alleviate their sufferings.

119. *What is an evil deed?*

Every one committed with the intention of hurting, injuring, and doing harm to others; and

no less, every selfish act done merely for personal advantage, regardless of the harm it may cause others.

120. *But surely there are selfish acts which are not injurious to others?*

Such acts are neither good nor bad in themselves. They are prudent if they promote a man's temporal welfare; they are wise if they further his spiritual and moral development; they are foolish if they injure his mind and body.

121. *Are there any duties to be observed towards one's own self?*

No; the doctrine of duties to oneself, or the duty of self-preservation, is nothing but a cloak for selfishness.

122. *Is it wrong to return evil for evil?*

Yes; the true Buddhist never retaliates the injuries of others.([36]) He leaves the evil-doer to eternal justice (Karma), he forgives him, and pities him as one who must suffer the effects of Karma in this life, or the next, in proportion to the hardness of his heart.

123. *Has the inveterate sinner to suffer eternally?*

No guilt incurred under conditions of time, however grievous it may be, is followed by eternal punishment. Such order of the universe would be most cruel and unjust. The moral kingdom of righteousness, which the Buddha proclaimed, has its foundation in eternal justice. In accordance

therewith every evil deed can of necessity only bring its corresponding temporary punishment, in this or a succeeding life; finite guilt — finite punishment.

124. *Is there no heaven, no hell?*

Not in the Christian, Jewish, and Mahometan sense of the words. But there are dark worlds or conditions of anguish and despair, where not a ray of hope of deliverance can penetrate, and where the sufferer has to remain until he has reaped the bitter fruit of his evil doings. Not till then does his good Karma (merit) bring about re-birth as a human being, nor is the opportunity afforded him to acquire fresh knowledge, and by a righteous life, to re-enter the path of salvation. There are equally bright worlds of joy, where the good man, who has not yet arrived at full redemption, may enjoy the fruits of his virtues. But if these fruits are consumed whilst the will and desire to live is still within him, he has to be re-born under a human form.([37])

125. *Are there any evil deeds requiring more than one birth-renewal?*

Certainly; there are such, of which the offender must bear the penalty in a succession of re-incarnations in a lower state.

126. *Are the misdeeds of the parents visited on the children?*

No, indeed; no one has to suffer for the wrongs of others; it would be contrary to the laws of

eternal justice, whereby guilt and suffering are so closely interwoven that one cannot exist without the other.

127. *Still we see that children, as a rule, are like their parents in mental and physical qualities, and that they inherit from them good and evil propensities, health and disease, riches and poverty. Does not this fact seem to refute the doctrine of Karma?*

On the contrary, it proves it. It is because we are like our parents in our innermost being, our individuality, that we have become their children, not the converse, as is generally believed; it is because at the moment of our re-incarnation we have greater affinity with them than with any other living being, that we have taken flesh from them. Similar causes produce similar effects. The inward resemblance between parents and children must necessarily find its expression in outward form, in inclinations and aversions, circumstances and the like.

The qualities of the parents are never hereditary — in other words, never can be transmitted from parent to child. Heredity is but a name, and the doctrine of Karma and re-incarnation can alone give a satisfactory explanation of the fact that parents and children have many qualities in common.

128. *Why then is there, not infrequently, a marked difference between parents and children?*

This results from the same law. Children, with all their affinity to their parents, are yet of separate individuality; they have their own Karma, and consequently many qualities beside those they share with their parents. If these fully develop in this earthly career, the children will appear totally different from their parents. The closest affinity between parents and children exists, in fact, only at the moment of conception. Later on, when separate life begins, each being pursues its own course of development, which often differs widely from that of the parent.

129. *Why has the upright and just man often so much to suffer here on earth?*

He suffers for the wrong committed in his former lives. It is the consequence of his unfavourable Karma.

130. *How is it that the wicked and unjust man often enjoys pleasures and honours?*

It is in consequence of the merit won in his former lives, of his favourable Karma. When, however, the fruits of his well-doing have been enjoyed, the bitter harvest of his misdeeds will have to be reaped in a succeeding re-incarnation.([88])

131. *Can one escape the consequences of wrong by committing suicide?*

No; the eternal justice is inexorable and all powerful. It cannot be evaded.

132. *Is it wrong to commit suicide?*

No; so long as no wrong is done any one thereby. For man is perfect master of his own life. This needs no proof. But suicide is a very foolish act, for it violently cuts a thread of life which, according to the law of Karma, has to be taken up again immediately, and under still less favourable conditions than those which the deluded man tried to escape by it.

133. *Why under less favourable conditions?*

Because our whole existence, with all its conditions, its joys and sorrows, is entirely the result of our own doings and our own faults. As long as error is not dispelled and guilt is not expiated, no birth-renewal under more favourable circumstances can possibly take place. Whoever is convinced of this truth will patiently bear the evils of life, intent only on living virtuously and on gaining knowledge, in order to become worthy of a happier birth. But he who, by foolishly committing suicide, tries to escape the suffering which is conducive to his amendment, gives proof of great deficiency of self-knowledge, and of want of capability and will to improve and become wise and good. In his delusion he destroys that fragile,

evanescent form which he takes for his real being, and he enters that downward path which, if persisted in, leads him to the dark states of anguish and despair.

134. *What is it, then, in us which is the subject of birth anew?*

The individual will or desire to live which constitutes the essence of our being, and which is reborn after the dissolution of our present material body through the agency of Karma — that is to say, is reincorporated in another form.

135. *Is not this individual desire of life, or this individuality, identical with what is called the soul?*

No; far from it. The belief in an immortal, personal soul — that is, an indestructible, eternal, separate substance which has only a temporary abode in the body — is regarded by Buddhism as a heresy due to ignorance of the true nature of life and living beings. The substance called "soul" by the followers of European religions, is nothing but an aggregate of various higher or lower faculties (Skandhas), and is dissolved after death into its constituent elements. What is re-materialized in a fresh birth is not the soul, but the individuality. This individuality will assume, in accordance to its Karma, a new person — that is, a new set of Skandhas.([89])

136. *Then the re-incarnated being is, in fact, no longer the same as before?*

It might seem so to the ignorant; but he who has just arrived at true insight knows certainly that it is the same being working good and evil, and reaping the fruit thereof in another re-incarnation.([40])

137. *How long does the individuality continue to renew itself in repeated births?*

Until perfect knowledge and Nirvana is attained. Then, and not till then, is that haven of rest attained where there is no more suffering, no more death, birth-renewal, or individualism.

138. *How is it that we have no remembrance of our former lives?*

We are blinded by earthly illusion and our eyes are covered by the veil of ignorance, so that we are almost or quite unconscious of our higher nature. We are, in the body, overweighted by fetters from which those who earnestly strive for redemption seek ever to get free.

139. *Can you illustrate this in any way?*

In the night we dream, and in our dreams we are at one time kings, and the next beggars or captives: sometimes poor and beset with difficulties, at other times in the full tide of prosperity and darlings of fortune. Nevertheless, it is one and the same self which takes on all these different characters.

Again: whilst dreaming we do not remember other dreams we have had, but when awake, we remember the dreams of many a night. It is the same with our different lives. The same individuality, the same self, is re-born under different forms; each re-incarnation is a dream of the individual will to live, now terrible, now full of joy. As long as we are dreaming one of these dreams of life, we do not remember our former life-dreams. But a Buddha, who has attained deliverance, dreams no longer. He is awakened, and he remembers all his former births.

The Arahats, too, possess the gift of remembering many of their former births. This knowledge is not, however, attained until they have completely thrown off the ten fetters, and have received the full fruition of enlightenment.

140. *What are the ten fetters?*

1. The delusion of self, or the belief in the eternal duration of self, individuality, soul.

2. Doubt of the moral order of the world, and of the way of deliverance.

3. The superstition that salvation can be gained by outward religious practices, rites, prayers, sacrifices, worship of relics, pilgrimages, and various other forms and ceremonies.

4. Sensuality, with its passions and desires.

5. Hatred and ill-will towards our fellow-men.

6. Love of life on earth.

7. Desire for life in Heaven or Paradise.

8. Pride.
9. Self-righteousness.
10. Ignorance (Avidya).

141. *Are not repentance and expiation conducive to perfection and deliverance?*

Yes, they are so, but repentance and expiation cannot bribe eternal justice. Nothing can be won or wrung from this by prayers and penance.

Repentance is of value only so far as it is the expression of a deeply felt sorrow for the wrong we have committed, and so far as it prompts us to make amends for such wrong to the limit of our power and do better for the future.

Passive repentance, however, and idle lamentations are of no good whatever.

Equally profitless is the belief in the efficacy of all outward acts, such as penances, self-mortifications and the like.

The true repentance of the Buddhist consists in his resolute determination to forsake his evil ways and to enter the path of salvation, and his true atonement in his conquest over his selfishness his evil passions and desires.

142. *Did the Buddha teach tnat only followers of his own religion can attain redemption?*

No; the Buddha declared the reign of moral order in the universe and of eternal justice, which does not regard the belief or unbelief of man, but

his inward state of mind, his good or bad intention. Every one meets with the recompense due to him, whether he be Buddhist or not. Deliverance is, therefore, equally attainable by non-believers, but the difficulties are greater, and there is the ever-present danger of missing one's aim.

We may liken this to a man who follows a bad guide, and possibly yet reaches the end of his journey after long and weary wanderings through bogs and mires, across wastes and rivers and mountains; whilst another, walking in the steps of a good guide, has only to go straight on, turning neither to the right nor the left, to arrive quickly and safely at his journey's end. The best and safest guide is the Buddha only.

143. *Does Buddhism teach its followers to hate, despise, or persecute non-believers?*

Quite the reverse. It teaches us to love all men as brethren, without distinction of race, nationality or creed; to respect the convictions of men of other beliefs, and to be careful to avoid all religious controversy. The Buddhist religion is imbued with the purest spirit of perfect toleration.([41]) Even where dominant, it has never oppressed or persecuted non-believers, and its success has never been attended with bloodshed. The true Buddhist does not feel hatred, but only pity and compassion for him who will not acknowledge nor listen to the truth, to his own loss and injury only.

144. *Are prayers, sacrifices, rites, and other religious ceremonies requisite to reach Nirvana?*

The Buddhist religion does not prescribe prayers and sacrifices in the literal sense of the word. But the repetition of passages from the sacred books, the reading and devout listening to sermons and discourses, are considered to be of great help in raising the spirit of the believer in the hour of temptation, and in strengthening his faith. All outward rites and ceremonies serve the same purpose, and so far are important and even essential to the layman, as they constantly put before him the true significance of life, withdraw his attention from the temptations of the world, and point him to the final goal.

But Bhikshu who has entered the path of deliverance and who aims at higher development, stands no longer in need of such means of assistance.

145. *Does the doctrine prescribe the worship of images, statues, relics of the Buddha and his disciples?*

No; according to the Buddha's teaching these practices are of no help to the furtherance of true knowledge, and may easily lead to error and superstition.

146. *Why, then, are the Buddhists in the habit of offering flowers and burning incense before the Buddha's statues?*

The lay adherents are wont to do so in order to give expression, by an outward act, to their veneration and gratitude. Europeans in the same way place flowers and wreaths on the monuments of their great men, and on the graves of their departed. Such a custom has therefore nothing objectionable in it, but it were a great mistake to attach any special merit to it.

147. *Are there such occurrences as miracles?*

No; a real miracle would be arbitrary violation of the universal laws of Nature. Buddhism teaches that all things in heaven and earth are subject to natural laws. This reign of law having for its basis the moral order of the universe (Karma), binds even the highest gods.

148. *But are there not many facts and occurrences quite inexplicable to us?*

Yes, a great many; only they must not be looked upon as miracles. They are brought about by natural laws which are yet unknown to us, but are fully understood and recognized by the Buddha.([42])

149. *Wherein does Buddhism essentially differ from other religions?*

Buddhism teaches the reign of perfect goodness and wisdom without a personal God, continuance of individuality without an immortal soul, eternal happiness without a local heaven, the way of salvation without a vicarious Saviour, redemption worked out by each one himself without any

prayers, sacrifices and penances, without the ministry of ordained priests, without the intercession of saints, without Divine mercy. Finally, it teaches that supreme perfection is attainable even in this life and on this earth.

150. *Did the Buddha recognize these truths in the night of enlightenment under the Bodhi-tree?*

Yes; these and many others which have become the fundamental doctrine of the Buddhist religion and are written down in the holy books.

151. *Were these holy books composed and written by the Buddha himself?*

Neither by him nor by any of the brethren who were the Buddha's first disciples. It was not the custom in India, in those times, to set in writing any religious or philosophic truths. They were taught by word of mouth from master to pupil, and impressed on the memory by incessant repetitions of words and whole passages.([43]) In this way they were handed down from one generation to another. In this same way the Buddhist doctrine came down to us by tradition; several centuries after the Buddha's decease, at the third great council of Pataliputra, in King Asoka's reign, the sacred writings were inscribed on palm-leaves by the Arahats.

152. *Who was King Asoka?*

One of the most powerful monarchs of India. He reigned from 259–222 before our era, became

a convert to Buddhism, and was most devoted to the spread of his newly adopted religion throughout the world. To this day the stone pillars on which by his order, the moral precepts of the Buddha were engraved, bear witness of King Asoka's energy, and his name is held in veneration and respect by every Buddhist.

153. *Do the holy books contain anything that is not the pure truth?*

Everything in the holy books regarding the subject of religion, human suffering, the Karma and the way to Nirvana, is the pure unadulterated truth. But there are certain portions of the Scriptures that contain various errors.

154. *Did the Buddha teach anything erroneous?*

No; a Buddha does not teach anything untrue. In the course of many ages, however, certain books and passages, not originally part of the Pitakas, were inserted, and these contain a number of erroneous statements.

155. *What books and passages are these?*

All those teaching of the primary origin of the world, of the shape and condition of the earth, and of natural science in general.

These additions are not the teaching of the Buddha, and need not be adopted by any believer.(44)

156. *Decay being inherent in all things, does it not follow that the Buddha's teaching will equally pass away?*

No; the doctrine of the Buddha will not pass away as long as the earth exists, for its pervading spirit is Eternal Truth itself, which was embodied in the person of the Buddha and in his words and ideas.

The outward form of the doctrine is subject to change, for in succeeding cycles of many thousand years' duration, new Buddhas will arise and teach the doctrine of Suffering and Redemption under new forms, and in harmony with the demands of new times.

THE BROTHERHOOD OF THE ELECT (SANGHA) (45)

157. *What is the Order or Brotherhood of the Elect?*

It is the assemblage of all those true disciples and followers of the Buddha, who have withdrawn from the world and entered the sublime eightfold path.

158. *Who is entitled to admission to the Order?*

Every one, without distinction of rank or sex, who has given testimony of his resolute determination to enter the path, provided he is free from those impediments which exclude from admission into the Brotherhood.

159. *What applicants are refused admittance into the Order?*

All those suffering from infectious or incurable diseases; all children below the age of fifteen; all slaves and bondsmen not yet freed; all debtors and persons answerable to the law, and not yet acquitted; all officials and soldiers engaged in active service; and all minors who have not obtained the consent of their parents and guardians.

160. *What are the preliminaries to reception into the Brotherhood?*

The novice first enters the Order as a pupil (Samanera), and has to pass through a time of probation under the superintendence of a master, chosen by the pupil himself from amongst the brethren.

161. *How long does this novitiate last?*

Four months at least in the case of grown-up people who have already been members of some religious order; minors remain in a state of probation until they come of age. With all other candidates the length of time of probation depends on the decision of the spiritual teacher and on the capabilities of the pupil.

162. *What are the duties of a Samanera?*

From the day of reception into the Order, the Samanera lies under the same obligations as the brethren. He must renounce the world and all its doings, keep the ten vows, devote himself to the diligent study of the holy doctrine, and faithfully observe the rules of the Order, and concentrate all the powers of his mind on the attainment of the one great aim — the attainment of moral and spiritual perfection.

163. *What are the eight parts or divisions of the sublime eightfold path?*

1. Right views, free from prejudice, superstition, and delusion.

2. Right aspirations, worthy of the noble, intelligent, and earnest man, and tending to the highest aim.

3. Right speech — kind, simple, and truthful.

4. Right conduct — conciliatory, upright, pure, and merciful.

5. Right mode of livelihood, which causes no harm or danger to any living being.

6. Right effort, bent on overcoming ignorance, evil desires, and the lust of life.

7. Right mindfulness, ever concentrating the attention on the holy doctrine and the precepts.

8. Right recollectedness, complete withdrawal of the senses, the attention, and the thoughts from external things, and the sinking of consciousness of self and will in Nirvana.

164. *What are the ten vows of the Brotherhood?*

1. Not to kill or to injure any living being.

2. Not to take aught not one's own or that is not freely given.

3. To live in absolute continuence.

4. To speak the truth always; not to deceive, nor to speak evil of another.

5. Not to use intoxicating drinks.

6. Not to eat at unseasonable times.

7. Not to take part in dancing, singing light songs, frequenting public shows, nor any other worldly dissipations and amusements.

8. Not to wear ornaments, use scents, oils, cosmetics, or whatever else tends to vanity.

9. Not to use soft and luxurious beds, but to sleep on a hard low couch.

10. Not to live otherwise than in voluntary poverty.

165. *What are the rules laid down for the brethren?*

They are the precepts for leading a pure and holy life, given by the Buddha and contained in the Vinaya. They may be comprised under the following four categories:

1. Precepts relative to outward order and discipline.
2. Instructions as to the obtaining and proper use of food, clothing, and other necessaries of life.
3. Rules of conduct, how to overcome all sensual lusts and desires.
4. Means for acquiring higher self-culture and perfection.

The Samanera, after having been thoroughly instructed how to practise these vows, rules, and precepts, and having passed satisfactorily the time of his probation, is then solemnly received into the Order as Brother (Bhikshu, Samana) by the Chapter.

166. *Can a brother leave the Order after once having been admitted into it?*

Yes; at any time. The Buddhist doctrine and the rules of the Brotherhood forbid any compul-

sion. If any one wishes to return into the world, he has merely to confess his want of self-control to the Superior. He is not detained by the Order, but free to retract his vows without incurring any disgrace or dishonour.

That Samana, however, who disgraces the robe he wears and the Brotherhood he belongs to by some grave transgression of the vows, is liable to the severest punishment — viz., expulsion from the Order.

167. *Are the brethren free to live wherever they like?*

No; they are enjoined to live in monasteries (Viharas), or as hermits.([46])

168. *In what relation does the Brotherhood stand to the Laity (Upasakas)?*

Their mutual relation is a purely moral one, free from all outward obligation. In imitation of their master, the Buddha, the mendicant brethren are to be to the laity a living example of self-control, self-denial and charity. When desired to do so, they are to explain and expound the doctrine to the laymen, and be ready at all times to give them spiritual advice and assistance in all the various circumstances of life when they stand in need of comfort and consolation.

169. *How are the Laymen to behave towards the Brotherhood?*

They are to show the members of the Order due respect and reverence, and provide for their

daily sustenance — clothing and the like. By so doing they are gaining merit, and they are promoting their own happiness.([47])

170. *Does the Order possess any spiritual power over the Laity?*

No; the Buddhist knows of no excommunication, no ecclesiastical laws and penances, no rigorous disciplinary system. But the Order repudiates all communion with an Upasaka who has been guilty of some grave moral offence, or who has spoken contemptuously of the Buddha, the doctrine, or the Order. In token of his being henceforth unworthy to provide for the wants of the brethren, they upset before him the alms-bowl they are in the habit of carrying about with them.

171. *What in the words of the doctrine should the true Bhikshu be?*

If a Bhikshu should desire, so the holy Scripture says, to attain the state of perfect peace, and Nirvana:

Let him be without guile, upright and conscientious, gentle-spoken, kind, modest, content, and having few wants, not over-anxious, keeping repose of heart, without presumption, without desire.

Let him do nothing unworthy; let him live in thought, word, and deed in the spirit of the doctrine and the precepts; let him strengthen himself in the knowledge of the four grand truths,

and walk without blame in the sublime eightfold path.

Let him not rejoice in good fortune, nor despond in calamity; let him not be elated by approbation, nor cast down by dishonour and disgrace; but let him ever keep that equanimity which results from the cessation of all desire.

Let him be mindful that it is not the dress which makes the Samana, not the outward observance of the vows and precepts; not a life of retirement, poverty and lowliness, nor any amount of learning; but that he alone, who is pure of heart and free from all concupiscence and desire, is a true disciple of the Tathagata.

Therefore, let him pursue knowledge, increase in holiness and self-control, and in charity.

Let him be kind and merciful towards all living beings, far and near, the strong and the weak, the good and the bad. Let him not deceive nor hurt, nor threaten, nor despise any one. Like a mother pitying her own child, so let him look with pity and compassion on every being.

Serene and unruffled, like a deep Alpine lake, must be the mind of him who walks in the sublime eightfold path.

For he who has overcome error and delusion, hope and fear, passion and desire, love and hatred — who lives in purity, who has got rid of the lust of life, and obtained supreme intuition — has reached the end of suffering and birth-renewal, has entered on Nirvana.

APPENDIX

VERSES FROM THE DHAMMAPADA.[1]

EARNESTNESS is the path to Nirvana, thoughtlessness is the path of death. Those who are in earnest do not die, those who are thoughtless are as if dead already.

Not the perversities of others, not their sins of commission and omission, but his own misdeeds and negligences should a wise man take heed to.

Like a beautiful flower full of colour but without scent, are the fine but fruitless words of him who does not act correspondingly thereto.

Long is the night to him who is awake, long is a mile to him who is tired, long is the way of transmigration to the foolish who do not know the true doctrine.

"These children and this wealth belong to me," with such thoughts a fool is tormented. He himself does not belong to himself, how much less sons and wealth.

As long as the evil deed does not bear fruit, the fool thinks it like honey; but when it ripens, then the fool suffers grief.

Most people are born again; evil-doers go to the dark worlds, righteous people go to a bright state. Those who are free from all fetters and worldly desires attain Nirvana — they are never born again.

Let no man think lightly of evil, saying in his heart,

[1] The Dhammapada forms part of the Sutta Pitaka, and is a most beautiful collection of verses and passages from the three Pitakas. (See Max Müller, "Sacred Books of the East," vol. x.)

it will not come nigh unto me. Even by water-drops a pitcher is filled; the fool becomes full of evil, even if he gather it little by little.

Let a man avoid evil deeds as a rich merchant avoids a dangerous road, as a man who loves life avoids poison.

He who has no wound on his hand, may touch poison. There is no evil for one who does not commit evil.

Aqueduct-makers lead the water, fletchers shape the arrow, carpenters plane a log of wood; wise people fashion themselves.

If a man conquer in battle a thousand times a thousand men, and if a man conquer himself, he is the greater conqueror.

One's own self conquered is better than all other people. Not an angel or Mara, or even a god, could change into defeat the victory of a man who has vanquished himself and always lives under restraint.

Do not follow the evil path, do not live in thoughtlessness, do not adhere to false doctrine, be a friend of the world. Rouse thyself, do not be idle, follow the law of virtue. The virtuous rest in bliss in this world and in the next.

From pleasure comes grief, from pleasure comes fear. He who is free from love of pleasure knows neither grief nor fear.

From concupiscence comes grief, from concupiscence comes fear. He who is free from concupiscence, knows neither grief nor fear.

From illusion comes grief, from illusion comes fear. He who is free from illusion, knows neither grief nor fear.

There is no fire like passion, there is no ill-luck like hatred, there is no pain like this body, there is no happiness like Nirvana.

The best of ways is the eightfold, the best of truths

the four words, the best of virtues passionlessness, the best of men he who has true insight.

Let a man overcome anger by love, let him overcome evil by good, let him overcome the greedy by liberality, the liar by truth.

By oneself the evil is done, by oneself one suffers, by oneself merit is won, by oneself one is purified.

Purity and impurity belong to oneself, no one can purify another.

You yourself must make an effort. The Buddhas are only proclaimers of the truth. The thoughtful only who enter the path, are freed from all fetters.

For self is the lord of self, who else could be the lord? He who has well subdued his own self, verily, that man has found a lord such as few can find.

NOTES

NOTE 1. — It has often been a subject of controversy among scholars in Europe whether Buddhism is more appropriately called religion or moral philosophy. It is, in fact, both. It combines the sublimest moral doctrines with the profoundest philosophic truths. Buddhism teaches its adherents the laws and force of the universe, reveals to man the essential nature of his being, points out to him his true destiny, passing far beyond this transient life of earth; enlightens his mind, rouses his latent moral powers and faculties, kindles in him the love for what is noble and good, and enables him, by devoting his whole mind to the conscientious fulfilment of its precepts, to attain the supreme goal of all living beings — namely, deliverance, eternal peace, Nirvana. Buddhism must therefore be called a religion.

At the same time it is also a system of philosophy, for it does not demand of its adherents a blind belief, but an unshaken reflection. The doctrines of Buddhism are not based on the arbitrary will of an incomprehensible God-Creator, or a supernatural revelation, but on the natural conditions of life and of the world. Buddhism does not attempt to frighten the evil-doer by threats of eternal punishment, but it seeks to enlighten him whose vision is obscured by earthly illusions, so that he may perceive the truth; leads him who is in earnest along the path of spiritual development to the supreme end, where earthly things vanish like shadows, and where the sad, apparently

inexplicable contradictions of human life find their solution in the knowledge of what is eternal and unchangeable.

NOTE 2. — The Sakyas belonged to the great Aryan race, and the region inhabited by them was situated in the north-east of India, at the foot of the Himalayas. Their capital was Kapilavasthu, forty miles from Benares, on the river Rohini, now called Kohana.

NOTE 3. — There were already in India recluses and ascetics many centuries before the birth of the Buddha. They were either living together in small forest huts of bambu, absorbed in the study of the holy mystic writings (the Upanishads of the Vedas), or separately in caves and under trees. A great number, too, were homeless wanderers, begging their bread from door to door, and inflicting on themselves the most cruel tortures, in order to extinguish all sensations, to free the soul from every earthly tie, and to attain union with Brahma.

NOTE 4. — The holy books of the Buddhist give the following account of these incidents:

During one of his drives in the park, Prince Siddhartha unexpectedly met an old man broken with age and infirmity, who, leaning on his stick, could hardly drag himself along. Siddhartha, greatly astonished, inquired of his charioteer, Channa, who that extraordinary being was. 'An old man,' was Channa's reply. 'Was he born in that state?' asked the prince. 'No, my lord; he once was as young and as blooming as you are.' 'Are there any more of these old men?' continued the prince, more and more amazed. 'A great many more.' 'And how did he come to this miserable state?' 'It is the appointed lot of all men to grow old and decrepit unless they die in their youth.' 'For me too, Channa?' 'Yes, my lord.'

This incident made so deep an impression on the young prince that he ordered his charioteer to return, for the park had lost all charms for him.

Another time, when he was driving out, he saw a man infected with leprosy. On Channa's explaining to him the nature of the sick man's complaint, the prince was so affected that he gave up every amusement and began seriously to reflect on human suffering. On a third occasion, some time after, he saw a dead body lying in the middle of the road. This sight produced such an effect on him that he instantly turned back, exclaiming, 'Woe to all human beings! Is there no means to destroy forever suffering and death renewed at every birth-renewal?' This question preoccupied him incessantly. A final accidental meeting with a mendicant put an end to his doubts and anxiety. The mendicant wore a yellow robe such as the Buddhist Bhikshu now. His features and demeanour were expressive of the deep calm and serenity of his mind. This prophetic sight, for such we must consider it, showed the prince the way to a solution of all the many harassing problems of existence. He forthwith resolved to retire from the world and to enter the path which alone leads to perfection.

This allegory, clothed in the form of a legend, embodies the profound truth that through conviction of the vanity and evanescence of life alone, men are led to renounce the world and to experience that total change of heart which all saints and martyrs have undergone, and which to the worldly minded man seems an utter impossibility.

Note 5. — The doctrine of re-birth or re-incarnation is the most ancient and venerable truth possessed by mankind. It is that primitive religious sense of which we seem to have an innate knowledge unless prejudices and errors have been instilled in our minds from early

youth. It is conspicuous in the different systems of religion of all civilized nations, with the sole exceptions of Jews, Christians, and Mahometans, and forms the corner-stone of all other doctrines. Even in Christian and Mahometan countries great and wise men have at all times clung to it in secret. It only can emancipate us from the false belief that man has been created out of nothing by an almighty God, and that he has even to be grateful for the doubtful gift of life. The doctrine of birth-renewal alone restores to man that true freedom of the will (spontaneity) which is incompatible with the belief in a God-Creator; only this is based on justice, and justifies the sublime saying of Jesus of Nazareth: "Whatever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." The doctrine of re-incarnation is the key to the mystery of our existence, and gives a satisfactory explanation to the many puzzling questions about the inequality of condition of the rich and poor, the righteous and the unrighteous, and the manifold miseries of suffering humanity. It teaches us that, like matter and force, our innermost being is indestructible. We have entered this life of our own will and continued it through endless changing forms from the beginning of the world up to this present day. Death is not annihilation, it is the transition from one impermanent form into another. Let him who delights in life take comfort; no God and no devil can deprive him thereof. Man's fate rests entirely with himself and on his own will; there are innumerable birth-renewals in store for him in which he will reap the fruits of his good and evil deeds.

But there is a way of release open to him who is weary of renewed existence with its accompanying joys and sorrows. Let him but pursue it with firm resolve and strenuous effort, and he is sure to reach the ultimate goal where individuality, which of necessity is limited, suffering and imperfect, will be merged into

what is eternal and immutable. All living things, consciously or unconsciously, aspire to this state of bliss, and nothing but their own illusions deter them from it.

NOTE 6. — Queen Maya was no longer living, she had died seven days after the child's birth. It is the fate of the mother of every future Buddha, for the womb that has given birth to a Buddha cannot afterwards bring forth a common mortal.

NOTE 7. — This place, where for many years the Buddha had given himself up to the severest penances, and where the light of truth rose within him, was afterwards called "Buddha Gaya," that is to say, the hermitage of the Buddha. When, a thousand years later, Buddhism had spread over the whole of Central and Eastern Asia, temples and monasteries, inhabited by numbers of Bhikshus, were erected on the spot, which became the favourite and chief resort of pilgrims from all the different Buddhist countries. A ruined temple still marks the place.

NOTE 8. — Not only the sublime founder of the Buddhist religion, but likewise many Christian saints have experienced in themselves the inefficacy of penance. "Self-mortification does not even lead to a favourable re-birth, much less to deliverance," says Nagasena, the great apostle of the Buddhists of the North.

For this reason, Buddhism rejects all self-torture and mortification of the flesh as useless and injurious, and directs its whole attention to the purification of heart and will from every evil passion and desire to the increase of self-culture and superior knowledge. The first step to it is the voluntary giving up of all possessions, sensual delights, worldly desires, the vow of poverty and of chastity.

NOTE 9. — This tree is called by Buddhists Bodhi, or Botree — *i.e.*, tree of knowledge — by botanists, *Ficus religiosa*. An offshoot of the original tree is still seen growing on the ruined temple of Buddha Gaya, not far from the present Rajgir. Another branch was taken to Ceylon and planted near Anuradhapura, the ancient capital of the island. This still flourishes, and is the oldest historical tree existent.

NOTE 10. — Mara, the tempter and prince of this world, plays about the same part in the Buddhist religion as Satan, the prince of darkness, does in the Christian religion. Jesus of Nazareth was tempted in the wilderness by Satan in the same way as the Buddha was by Mara. This allegory of course represents a mental conflict.

NOTE 11. — Buddhism neither denies nor affirms the existence of gods; they are not required for the attainment of moral perfection and salvation. Every one is free to believe in one or in a plurality of gods, if he has a wish to do so; but he must remember that all gods pass away as we do, and are subject to birth-renewal, even if their lives are of millions of years' duration, and that the saint (Arahat) who has worked out his salvation, and above all the Buddha, is superior to any god. The word gods "Devanta," mentioned above, means inhabitants of higher and brighter worlds.

NOTE 12. — An Arahat is one who has attained the fourth and supreme stage of holiness, and with it Nirvana.

NOTE 13. — The Buddha himself inculcated his doctrine on the mind of his first disciples, who were Brahmans — that is, men whose whole life had been spent in contemplation, self-denial, and strenuous efforts to attain Eternal Truth. This fact alone explains how it

was possible that in the short space of five months these men should so completely master the doctrine, that they, too, could be teachers.

NOTE 14. — The alms-bowl of the Buddhist mendicant is an earthen or metal dish with a straight handle. Each member of the Brotherhood is provided with one of these bowls, in which he collects the daily food. The Buddha himself did not infringe this rule, unless when he was invited to take his meal in the house of one of his lay adherents.

NOTE 15. — In the remote ages, of which we do not possess the faintest historical record, perfectly enlightened Buddhas appeared preaching the saving truth, for salvation is forever within reach of erring guilty suffering humanity, and man is never in want of the means, if he is but sincere in his effort to attain the truth. Whenever the pure doctrine is in danger of falling into decay and sensuality, a new Buddha is born. The last of these, the light of our own age, is this very Buddha Gotama whose followers we are.

NOTE 16. — No member of the Brotherhood is allowed to go unattended into the house of a woman.

NOTE 17. — The Blessed One is a frequently used epithet for the Buddha. There exists a large number of similar terms, all expressive of some quality of the Buddha. In this way he is called Sakyamuni, "the Wise" of the tribe of the Sakyas; the "Holy," because he is free from the will to live, from all passions and desires; the "Victorious," because he has won perfection after a long and continuous struggle with error and earthly concupiscence; the "Enlightened," because the full light of truth rose within him under the Bodhi-tree; the "Conqueror," because he has overcome Mara

the tempter and prince of this world, of sensual love, of death and darkness; and finally, the "Light of the World," because, instead of passing away out of existence after having gained Nirvana, he preached the saving truth, and made its light to shine over all the world.

NOTE 18. — Buddhists even now, though there has not been any active missionary labour for a space of 1500 years, far outnumber the supporters of all Christian Churches collectively, for they amount to 450 millions — that is, a full third part of the whole of mankind. A century before the birth of Jesus of Nazareth, Buddhist apostles had already pushed their way as far west as the Caucasus, and many brothers and lay adherents were living at Alexandria. There can therefore be hardly any doubt that Jesus of Nazareth, whose doctrines in their most essential parts are identical with those of the Buddha, must have been a disciple of Buddhist mendicants from the age of twelve to thirty, a space of time totally unaccounted for by the Gospels, and that under their guidance he must have attained Arahatship. Later on he returned to his native country to preach the doctrine to his people.

In course of time his doctrine became distorted and mixed up with many errors from the Old Testament of the Jews. The fundamental tenets, however, and the personal character of the founder of Christianity are of Buddhist origin. Jesus was an Arahat who had attained Nirvana, and his name will always be revered by every Buddhist. But now that the European descendants of the Aryans have reached the age of maturity, and are able to comprehend the pure unadulterated truth of the Buddha, his doctrine will become the religion of the future, and effect in Europe a total change of views and ideas, such as has not been

witnessed since the time of the introduction of Christianity.

NOTE 19. — Ananda was the personal attendant of the Buddha from the time of his joining the Brotherhood. He was the disciple beloved best by his master, because of his childlike simplicity and the affectionate gentleness of his disposition.

NOTE 20. — Tathagata means one who, like his predecessors, has come into the world to bring the true doctrine again to light. The term is used by the Buddha whenever he is speaking of himself.

NOTE 21. — Transfiguration is one of the characteristics of Buddhaship, and may sometimes take place with Arahats and saints. Similar instances are on record of Jesus of Nazareth, of St. Francis of Assisi, and other saints of the Western Church.

NOTE 22. — It is our ignorance of the true nature of man; of the universe, and of the moral order of the world, which involves us over and over again in error and wrong, for which we have to suffer in succeeding re-incarnations. It is our earthly blindness that makes us desirous of things useless in themselves, and often productive of pain rather than pleasure; makes us prize highly what is intrinsically worthless, grieve for what is not deserving our interest, and delight in what is injurious, nay, even fatal to us. It is our want of true insight which makes us set our affections on things that are perishable, gets us entangled in quarrels and difficulties in the fierce struggle for existence, and makes us lose sight altogether of our true felicity. Thus our whole existence becomes an endless chain of desires unrealized, of deceptions and disappointments, of passions and longings ungratified, or which, if gratified for a short time, return with renewed violence,

destroying our bodily and mental strength, and keeping us in a continual state of discomfort and suffering.

NOTE 23. — The term "will to live," in the Buddhist sense of the word, does not merely imply what a European understands by "conscious will," but rather that instinctive life-love which, partly consciously, partly unconsciously to themselves, is inherent in all living beings, animals, and plants, as well as man. In this term, "will to live," or craving for existence, are summed up all those functions, powers, desires, inclinations and disinclinations which tend to the preservation of life, and the acquisition of comfort and enjoyment.

The European reader, desirous of entering into the true spirit of the doctrine, ought carefully to bear in mind the exact meaning of the term.

NOTE 24. — The non-Buddhistic European reader will not easily discover the rich mine of knowledge and religio-philosophic truth underlying these few sentences, and it is of the utmost necessity that they should be the subject of the deepest reflection. No one can expect to arrive at a thorough knowledge about the true nature of existence and the doctrine of the Buddha unless he has fully entered into the spirit and meaning of the four "Grand Truths," and has made them quite his own.

NOTE 25. — Most Europeans, not excepting many learned men, have very incorrect notions about Nirvana. Nirvana literally means, "being extinct," "gone out," like the flame of a lamp blown out by the wind, or gone out for want of oil. This led to the erroneous idea that Nirvana is the same as annihilation. Nirvana signifies, on the contrary, a state of supreme moral perfection impossible to be conceived

by any one who still wears the fetters of earthly desires.

What then is extinct — "blown out" — in Nirvana?

Extinct is the lust of life, the craving for existence and enjoyment; extinct are the delusions and allurements of life and its sensations and desires; blown out is the flickering light of self, of individuality (soul).

True, the Arahat, the perfect saint, though he has reached Nirvana, still continues living in the body, because the body with all its powers is the natural consequence of his former errors, the result of his doings in a former life, and these, having begun to take effect, cannot be arrested. But as soon as the Karma of his former life is exhausted the Arahat dies, and nothing being left to bring about a new birth (neither Tanha nor Karma), the Arahat passes away into eternal rest and peace, into Parinirvana.

Parinirvana, in the sense of other religions and of scientific materialism, does certainly mean "annihilation," for nothing whatever remains of the constituents of human life. But from the point of view taken by the Arahat, it is the world with all its appearances — that is nought, is illusion, error; whilst Parinirvana is the entering into eternity, the everlasting the ever-true existence where all suffering, individuality. separate being, and transmigration are at an end.

Note 26. — The European student of Buddhism must be repeatedly reminded not to confound "the will to live" — that is, the desire for life, the cleaving to existence — with the "conscious will" or so-called "free-will." Conscious will is but a fraction of the whole "will to live" — namely, such portion as passes through the organ of the brain, which is the vehicle of consciousness; but the greater portion of this "will to live" never reaches consciousness in plants and animals, and but imperfectly in men. It shows itself as

a mere blind instinct, an inveterate cleaving to existence, an effort to grasp at everything that makes life pleasant and to avoid whatever hurts and endangers it. Many so-called pessimists, for instance, who pretend to despise existence, and whose conscious will actually turns away from life, are frequently under the delusion of having overcome the "will to live." But such is not the case; their selfishness, attachment to pleasure and enjoyment, their want of self-abnegation, gives evidence that the "unconscious lust of life" is still alive within them, and will lead them to a fresh incarnation. The real extinction of the will shows itself in perfect unselfishness and self-denial, in patience under suffering, in the absence of all passions (anger, hatred, envy, ill-will, covetousness, sensuality, pride, avarice, vanity); in true equanimity, sincere charity to all living beings, and in the renunciation of reward for good deeds either in this world or any other (Heaven or Paradise).

Note 27. — All that we are is the result of what we have done; it is founded on our doing; it is made up of our doing. If a man acts with evil mind (will, purpose), pain follows him as the wheel follows the foot of the horse that draws the cart. But if a man acts with a pure mind, happiness follows him like his shadow. (Dhammapada.)

Note 28. — It is most difficult to put in few words to the European student, grown up in totally different ideas, what is meant by Karma. Oral instruction is indispensable to a full explanation.

Note 29. — By "creation" the Buddhist only understands the renewal of a world which has undergone destruction. Such destruction is brought about either by water or fire, or similar elementary forces, and is

always localized and confined to an inconsiderable part of the universe. Its real and original cause, however, is the accumulated guilt or demerit of living beings, their unfavourable Karma, whilst the renewal of these perished worlds is owing to favourable Karma. Decay and renewal of heavenly bodies are of constant recurrence in the immensity of space. Modern European physical science, as far as the outward result is concerned, takes the same view as put by Buddhists for the last 2400 years.

NOTE 30. — Stem courageously the stream of passion; drive out concupiscence, O Samana. When once you have perceived the utter vanity of all transient things, you have arrived at the knowledge of what is eternal. (Dhammapada.)

NOTE 31. — Those who remain living in the world can, at best, attain the third stage of holiness, of "Anagamin." At their death they are re-born in one of the higher regions in the worlds of light, to pass over from thence, after a longer or shorter period, into Nirvana. It is, however extremely difficult for any one living in the world to become "Anagamin," as he is exposed to far too many temptations.

NOTE 32. — In this the first principal vow are not only included men, but all living beings, and for that reason no one who intentionally hurts, kills or torments an animal can be a follower of the Buddha, or have a favourable re-birth.

NOTE 33. — It is only the Brotherhood who keep this vow to its full extent. For the lay adherent it simply means to abstain from spirituous liquors. The Upasaka may therefore take wine and beer in moderation.

NOTE 34. — The sensual man who, to his own disquiet, is animated by the lust of life and by earthly passions, is very much mistaken in imagining that the gratification of the senses affords any happiness. Satisfaction is of very short duration, and desire will return with ever-increasing impetuosity. The gratification of one desire leads to the birth of another, and final satisfaction is impossible. Add to this the inevitable disappointments, failures, the strife, annoyances and disputes arising from contests with our fellowmen, who are pursuing the same end. This incessant warfare can only be kept up at the expense of mind and body. The more we give full sway to our passions the more they increase, and the more swiftly our mental and physical powers, the only means for enjoyment, decline.

Increase of concupiscence is therefore attended by decrease of the means for its gratification. This is the inexorable law of Nature, which avenges such perversity. Whoever seriously reflects must come to the conclusion that it is most foolish to run after sensual pleasure and earthly wealth, which cannot afford any real happiness.

Truly does the Dhammapada say: "What place for merriment, what place for joy, is this world, which is only kept going by the flames of sensual lusts? You walk in darkness for ever unless you seek for the light which alone can dissipate it."

NOTE 35. — Not in infinite space, not in the depths of the ocean, nor in the far recesses of the mountains will you find a refuge from the consequences of your evil deeds. (Dhammapada.)

NOTE 36. — "He has abused me, he has robbed me, he has ruined me." With those who harbour such thoughts, hatred will never cease; for hatred does not

yield to hatred; hatred yields to love. This is the moral law of the universe. (Dhammapada.)

NOTE 37. — When a man has come fully to know and understand the "Four Grand Truths," he will no longer crave for earthly happiness, nor for existence in a better world, but only long for deliverance, for eternal rest and peace; for as long as individuality, "self," is not overcome and vanquished, suffering, birth, and death are not yet overcome. Not even angels and gods (this is the name given to higher beings in a higher world) are exempt from death and birth-renewal. Everything subject to change is subject to suffering. But when all ill-will, all desire, ignorance and individuality become extinct in Nirvana, then, and not till then, will suffering and re-incarnation come to end. This is the supreme aim to which the sage aspires.

NOTE 38. — It is written in the sacred books: "The evil deed is not like new milk, which quickly clots. It is like a smouldering fire glowing under the ashes till its time is come, then, suddenly bursting into flames, it destroys the illusory edifice of happiness in which the evil-doer fancied himself secure."

The inequality of the outward condition of men, the seeming injustice of their fate, which often reduces the righteous man to a state of severe suffering, whilst the wicked is in the full enjoyment of every earthly happiness, is irrefutable evidence of the moral necessity of re-incarnation to every one who does not wilfully shut his eyes to the truth. No thoughtful man can deny that this universe is founded on eternal justice. Consequently, the origin of suffering must be guilt, and if this guilt cannot be traced in this life, it must have been committed in a former birth, whilst well-being and joy must be the fruit of former merit.

Nevertheless, the happy man must not be elated; a change may be close at hand: for except a man is for ever bent on increasing his merit by good and worthy deeds, he will have to suffer bitterly for his thoughtlessness, whilst another, weighed down at present with care and sorrow, may advance towards a joyful re-incarnation.

NOTE 39. — The almost universal belief in an "immortal soul" within us — that is to say, in an entity limited but eternal, and endowed with consciousness, arises chiefly from the selfish craving for personal immortality. It is a superstition forming part of the delusive "will to live," and is one of the ten fetters which rivet man to life and prevent his deliverance.

NOTE 40. — To prove to the uninitiated reader how a man can to a certain degree become quite another without losing his identity, it will suffice to point out to him the difference in the stages of life. The old man is quite other than the infant, and none the less both are one and the same person.

NOTE 41. — Some thirty years ago, when the French (Roman Catholic) missionaries asked leave of the king of Siam to have a settlement in his country, it was granted with the greatest readiness and kindness. And the king, moreover, gave the missionaries a piece of land and wished them all possible success. The attempt proved a failure; no creditable converts were made. But there were some of another sort who tried to show their Christian zeal by defiling the images of a Buddhist temple close by. The inhabitants of the village belonging to the temple complained to the king, but he advised them to keep quiet, to put up the images in some other place, and to avoid any discussion, for, he added, "Religion stands too high to be

made the subject of such petty quarreling with foreigners."

When the English Protestant missionary, Edkins, went to see a Buddhist monastery in China, the Superior received him with great kindness, and even offered him gratuitously a piece of land attached to the monastery for the purpose of building a Christian Church. Hundreds of similar instances can be mentioned.

By Christians this is called apathetic indifference, by Buddhists tolerance, and is the sentiment of kindness enjoined by the Buddha himself, even towards non-believers.

NOTE 42. — To African savages telegraphy, for instance, is a miracle; Europeans know that it rests on natural laws. It is the same with phenomena which we are not able to explain.

NOTE 43. — All the European Orientalists are unanimous in their admiration of the extraordinary powers of memory of Indian Brahmans. Max Müller, one of the greatest living authorities in Oriental lore, maintains that if the collective manuscripts and printed copies of the Brahman Scriptures were suddenly destroyed, they could easily be replaced again, word for word and syllable for syllable, with the help of the Brahmans, who know them perfectly by heart.

NOTE 44. — Buddhism has no mission to teach physical science. It has nothing to do with the outward qualities of things, but with their innermost being, and therefore its position with regard to science is neither hostile nor dependent.

The educated Buddhist is not prejudiced against natural science. He carefully examines the conclusions advanced, uninfluenced by any religious scruples, and he adopts those which seem to him to be correct.

European learned men have for this reason always met with kindness and courtesy in Buddhist countries.

The Buddhist knows that science, like everything else, is liable to change; that it is progressing, and able to impart much useful knowledge not taught in the times of the Buddha. On the other hand, he is aware that no progress, no discovery, can be made in contradiction to the Buddha's teaching. He looks on science as a terrestrial sister of the eternal truth.

Science enlightens the understanding and enables the mind to receive higher knowledge, but the eternal truth alone, taught by the Buddha, leads to full light and deliverance.

He who possesses perfect knowledge of the "Four Grand Truths" can dispose with science, whilst the most comprehensive scientific learning is yet, from the standpoint of higher knowledge, ignorance (avidya), because it cannot lead to deliverance from suffering and re-birth.

Note 45. — The word "Sangha" has been rendered by "Brotherhood of the Elect," though the term does not quite correspond with the original meaning. "Sangha" literally signifies, "the Brotherhood of all the Bhikshus or Samanas," the true disciples and followers of the Buddha.

Both Bhikshu and Samana are terms for which no adequate translation can be found. The literal translation of Bhikshu is "beggar," but not found in the modern European sense of the word, where it implies something low and degrading. Samana is one who, for the sake of moral development, abstains from every sensual enjoyment — in point of fact, an ascetic. The simplest rendering of Bhikshu would perhaps have been "begging monk, or mendicant"; but this, too, might easily have led to some misunderstanding: for the Bhikshus differ from Christian mendicants inas-

much as they do not take the vow of blind obedience to their superiors, and in this that their vows are not irrevocable. Some Europeans have rendered the word Bhikshu by "priest," but this is far from correct, for the Bhikshus possess no sacerdotal privileges. The word "Elect" was finally adopted as the nearest approach to the original meaning of the word. The sacred books frequently speak of the Bhikshus and the Samanas as the "Ariya" — that is, the nobles, the "Elect," a term indicative of their calling and their position with reference to the great mass of the laity.

Note 46. — Of course the women members of the Order (Bhikshunis) live in separate Viharas. They are not allowed to live alone in hermitages, and are always under the superintendence of the Bhikshus.

Note 47. — The bestowing of alms on the Brotherhood is no obligatory duty of the layman. He gives of his own free will, and because he thereby gains merit and promotes his own welfare. Buddhism teaches that it is not the Bhikshu who should be grateful for gifts received from the Upasaka, but the latter to the first, because the recipient affords the donor an opportunity to gain merit by a charitable act.

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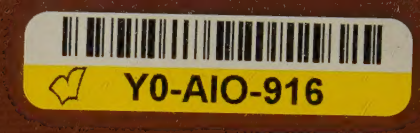
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